

TROPIC SEA then languished at Kingston for a protracted period of time. If the owners did not simply walk away from her, then an Admiralty Marshal's sale in Jamaica would have severed the Toronto owners' connection with her. What happened to her after that is anybody's guess. She was seen by T.M.H.S. member George Lee at Kingston in 1967, at which time she appeared to be listing. She remained shown in Lloyd's Register (with the owner still reported as Cia. de Navegacion Tropicana S.A.) until she was deleted in 1986, no doubt as a result of having been untraced for more than ten years. There never was an entry in Lloyd's Annual Casualty Return for her being scrapped, and so reports of her being dismantled in 1985 would appear to be pure supposition with no basis in fact. At the same time, we cannot imagine that such a venerable steamer with inoperable boilers could possibly have seen any further service. She most likely mouldered away in a backwater and either sank or was broken up by locals with no formal report of her demise ever being filed.

It is unfortunate indeed that such a pretty little steamer became involved in such nefarious goings-on after an exemplary career of stalwart service on the Great Lakes. ST. HELIERS certainly deserved better, but she was only one of a large number of small lakers which found employment (of sorts) in southern climes after their usefulness on the lakes came to an end.

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Ed. Note: We are extremely happy to have been able to present the history of this interesting steamer which served for almost three decades on the lakes. For their assistance in the preparation of this feature, we extend our most sincere thanks to Jaap Bijl (of the Netherlands), Bill Breaker, Dr. Ian Buxton (of Newcastle, U.K.), Skip Gillham, Bob Graham (of Historical Collections of the Great Lakes, B.G.S.U.), William Lafferty, George Lee, Alan Mann, Gerry Ouderkirk, Bill Schell and Vern Sweeting. An account of the meanderings of TROPIC SEA (albeit somewhat confusing and difficult to follow, and written from a reporter's point of view rather than from that of a marine historian) appeared in the May 19, 1962, issue of "Maclean's" magazine; it was entitled "The Slapstick Saga of the s.s. Tropic Sea - Mutiny, Gunplay and Piracy (of Sorts) on the Bounding Main".

We should note that a late-received clipping from "The Free Press Herald" of Wednesday, April 18, 1945, recorded the appointment of 21-year-old Frances McPhail, of Toronto, as wireless operator aboard ST. HELIERS. It was noted that she was "the first woman to hold such a position". ST. HELIERS' master, Capt. Joseph Ouelette, of Penetanguishene, was reported to be "quite pleased with the work of the newest member of his staff". The job on ST. HELIERS was her first posting after completion of a 36-week course at the Radio College of Canada.

If any of our members can give us any further information on the lake service of ST. HELIERS or her final demise, we would be very pleased to hear from them.

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LAY-UP LISTINGS - WINTER 2001-2002

With this issue, we conclude our annual winter lay-up listings by presenting lists for ports from which we had no listing earlier, and by adding to or otherwise correcting listings we gave last month. We continue to name even very small vessels such as workboats, although we may not include such minutiae next year as it makes collecting and assembling the information very difficult indeed.

Halifax: Add ALGOCATALYST (previously at Sorel); arrived Jan. 31st, left Feb. 15 and returned Feb. 21st.

St. Jean-Port-Joli: Note JACQUES CARTIER and LE DRAVEUR are tour boats, not ferries.